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Governor

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DIRECTIVE 2024-005

Date: June 28, 2024
To: All Department, Office, and Activity Heads
From: Governor
Subject: Formal Adoption of the 2024 CNMI State Hazard Mitigation Plan

This Directive formally adopts the August 2024 Update of the CNMI State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) in compliance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), Public Law 106-390, § 104(a), codified at 42 U.S.C § 5165. The DMA 2000 mandates that every State and Territory in the United States must develop, update, and obtain FEMA approval of its SHMP every five years to remain eligible for pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation grant programs. The 2024 SHMP Update satisfies this requirement, building upon previous updates approved by FEMA in 2018, 2014, 2010, 2007, and 2004.

Recent catastrophic typhoons that have ravaged the CNMI underscore the urgent need for proactive hazard mitigation to enhance resilience against future typhoons and other natural and man-made hazards. Climate change is significantly altering global weather patterns, leading to extreme cold, extreme heat, drought, more frequent and intense storms, flooding, coastal inundation, and sea level rise. The CNMI is also susceptible to other natural hazards, including volcanic eruptions and frequent earthquakes, because it is located atop the Marianas Ridge along the Marianas Trench within the Pacific Ring of Fire, one of the world's most seismically active regions.

Natural hazards and evolving environmental conditions compel us to reassess our built environment, recognize vulnerabilities, and continue developing long-term hazard mitigation plans and strategies. Our objective is to strengthen infrastructure, protect critical facilities, industries, businesses, and residences, and minimize disaster impacts while facilitating effective recovery efforts. Promoting smart, safe growth and sustainable economic development are key goals.

The adoption of the 2024 SHMP update provides the CNMI with essential resources, including hazard analyses, risk vulnerability assessments, and mitigation goals, objectives, and strategies. This enables the CNMI to qualify for FEMA's pre-disaster and post-disaster hazard mitigation grant programs, thereby reducing the loss of life and property, minimizing economic disruption, safeguarding ecosystems and critical habitats, and preserving cultural and historic resources.

The Office of the Governor, in collaboration with the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, led the coordination of the 2024 update of the CNMI SHMP, with technical assistance provided by Nimbus Environmental Services.

By the authority vested in me under the CNMI Constitution, Article III, § 10, and pursuant to Public Law 18-4, which established the CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management Office, I hereby formally adopt the updated 2024 CNMI State Hazard Mitigation Plan. I urge prompt implementation by all government agencies and organizations, the private sector, and our community to enhance the CNMI's resilience against all hazards.

Regards,



Arnold I. Palacios